

Creating the plan

It's May 29th. The play opens next April. "Wow," you think, "no worries, I have nearly a whole year."

That year can slip away quickly. Better to get your preparation done now, forget about it for six to eight months, and then pick it up.

Last night you and some friends read the play aloud. Ninety minutes. The one-minute rule converts that to ninety hours of rehearsal.

You begin at the end. April 1st - opening night when your job is done.

You start with that date and work back to today.

Go back 7 days from April 1st for production week. It might be shorter but plan on that for now. It's March 25th. Always give yourself some fudge or wiggle room when you first make schedules. The extra time is for the unexpected. Make it generous.

Go back 10 days from that for the rehearsals and run-throughs where the actors are off-book and struggling to bring lines and actions together. It's March 15. Still haven't taken any time from the 90 hours of rehearsal time because remember, production week and off-book rehearsals don't count.

The theatre group asked you to do all the scheduling but you should check a few things before proceeding.

Things to consider about rehearsals, the cast, and the crew:

- Does the theatre group have specific times that you're allowed to rehearse?
- Is the rehearsal space shared so there are access restrictions or can you use it at any time?
- Is there some sort of 'traditional' rehearsal time that people are used to?
- How many hours a week can people work, and it is work, outside of their regular jobs and lives?
- How many hours can you work under those same circumstances because you have to be at every rehearsal?

Points one and two are different e.g. the theatre group may say, "We never rehearse on Friday nights," even though the rehearsal hall is available. If this is your first show, be reasonable about your time.

After you research the 'best rehearsal times' question, you come up with the following weekly rehearsal plan:

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
12:30 - 5		7 - 10:30	7 - 10:30	7 - 10:30		

Store the information for use on your audition notice.

That plan gives you 15 hours/week for rehearsal. Divide 90 hours by 15 hours/week and you get six weeks.

Backwards from March 15 for 6 weeks lands us the first week in February, say the 5th. You still have to schedule auditions and callbacks but that's covered in Audition planning. Right now you have to check for surprises.